



PRESS RELEASE

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Embassy Statement on BSE Test Results

On June 24, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns announced that additional testing confirmed the presence of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in a brain sample taken from a U.S. cow born before implementation of the ruminant feed ban in the United States. The animal, which was the only one out of nearly 400,000 animals tested since June 2004 to test positive for BSE, never entered the food or feed supply chain. The animal was removed from the supply chain and its remains were incinerated.

There are several key points to note as this case is considered:

1. **SRM Removal:** The United States has had a strict policy in effect of removing all potentially BSE infective tissues (specified risk materials, or SRMs) from beef carcasses during processing in order to ensure the safety of our beef for both the domestic and export markets. The World Organization for Animal Health recently recognized that the type of SRM removal policy and procedures practiced in the United States ensure that beef can be safely traded and consumed internationally, regardless of whether the exporting country has BSE or not.
2. **Feed Ban:** There is a scientific consensus that contaminated feed is the main way BSE is spread among animals. The United States has prohibited feeding material that could contaminate feed for ruminants such as cattle since 1997.
3. **Age:** The animals whose meat the United States proposes to export to Korea were all born and raised after the ruminant feed ban and SRM-removal laws were put in place.
4. **Sound Science:** The Korean government and the U.S. government recognize that Korea's examination of the safety of U.S. beef should be based on sound science. We will continue to share information on our safety measures with Korean authorities, as well as all available information pertaining to the above-mentioned case.

SRM removal, the feed ban and other U.S. BSE prevention and containment measures that date back to the late 1980's, have been completely effective in protecting the American public against transmission of the variant form of Creutzfeldt-Jacobs Disease (vCJD) through BSE prions. Among our population of some 270 million, there have been no cases of vCJD confirmed to have been contracted within the United States. Americans have continued to consume U.S. beef with full confidence in the ability of our regulatory system to provide a safe product. Also, 70 nations are now confidently purchasing and consuming U.S. beef. For more information, see Secretary Johanns' press release, transcripts from his press conference and fact sheets about BSE testing variables at USDA.gov.